SUMMARY

The dissertation deals with two methods that, on the one hand can be considered as a novelty in the Hungarian social science, on the other hand give answers to problems which usually make the application of generally prevalent methods impossible. One of these methods is Structural Equation Modeling, the other is Multilevel Modeling. We will present the application of these methods in social sciences by the database of the International Social Justice Project (ISJP). The dissertation emphasizes on the description of the methodological and statistical background of these analyses, however, sociological examples are also given to the methdological part. The applied examples carry dual purpose. One of them is to make the methods more transparent for the reader. The other is to present the sociological consequences that can be made on the field of social justice by using these methods.

In the course of complex, international or longitudinal researches – such as ISJP – a demand frequently occurs for the comparision of different groups (for example nations or years). During these kinds of researches we often would like to analyze the latent, not directly or just hardly measurable dimensions of the society. These kinds of researches bring up a number of methodological problems, for the most of which Structural Equation Modeling suggests a solution. This method can be considered innovative – compared to the current ones – as we are able to test whether a complex index is built the same way, therefore its comparision in groups is relevant or not. In addition to these benefits, the application of this method makes it possible to feature the society in our models not only by the explanation of one dependent variable, but as a system of complex structures as well. The first part of the dissertation details this method.

The second method, which we are concerned with in the dissertation is the Multilevel Modeling. The usage of this method is recommended when our observations are not independent from each other, so the prerequisite of the generally applied multidimensional regressions is injured. The example for this problem in the dissertation is the factorial survey, where one respondent evaluated more situations, and the analysis takes place on the level of situations. Besides dealing with these kinds of data, the method provides opportunity to examine the relations between the variables of different levels and their impact on the examined question. The second part of the dissertation describes this method in details.